

## METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR PROVIDING A CIRCLE OF TRUST ON A NETWORK

### ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5           Embodiments of the present invention provide a circle of trust on a network. The circle of trust is configured by exchanging credential of a first and a second affiliated entity. The credentials of the first affiliated entity is stored in a trusted partner list of the second affiliated entity. The credentials of the second affiliated entity is stored in a trusted partner list of the first affiliated entity. Thereafter, a circle of trust session may  
10 be provided when a client device initiates use of a resource on a relying party device by providing an authentication assertion reference. The identity of the issuing party of the authentication is determined as a function of the authentication assertion reference. The relying party sends an authentication query containing its credential to the issuing party. The issuing party determines if the relying party is a trusted entity based upon whether  
15 the relying party's credential is contained in the trusted partner list of the issuing party.